



COLCHICINE

Agent Overview:	The meadow saffron, often called an autumn-blooming crocus, is the source of Colchicine. Colchicine is used as an herbal treatment of gout. Early signs of poisoning include burning feeling in mouth, difficulty swallowing, and intense thirst. Ingesting colchicine leads to profuse vomiting and diarrhea, which can be bloody; and severe abdominal pain and paralysis, followed by hypovolemic shock and multi-system organ failure within 24-72 hours. Coma, convulsions, and sudden death might also occur. Complications include bone marrow suppression with resultant leukopenia, thrombocytopenia (nadir in 4-7 days), and possibly sepsis. Colchicine can be detected in urine, serum or plasma; or in environmental samples by some commercial laboratories.
Lab Specimen Submittal:	Authorization by Dr. Jane Getchell, Director DPHL; Christina Pleasanton, Deputy Director DPHL; or Tara Lydick, Chemical Terrorism Coordinator.
Type of Specimens Necessary for Testing:	<u>Urine:</u> 25mL-50mL screw-cap container <u>Whole blood:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Three, 5 or 7 mL purple-top (EDTA) tubes (vacuum fill only) AND- One, 5 or 7 mL gray-top or green-top (vacuum fill only) AND- Two empty urine cups and two empty blood tubes for each lot # submitted.
Packaging Instructions:	<u>Urine:</u> freeze specimen upon collection and ship on dry ice; label specimens and package individually; wrap with absorbent material. <u>Whole blood:</u> place filled tubes in a shipping rack for stability, wrap the tubes in absorbent material, and secure with tape. Place the packaged tubes in a secondary unbreakable container. Specimens may be shipped cold but <i>must not</i> be frozen. <u>All:</u> wrap sample containers and layers with tamper-proof, waterproof forensic evidence tape initialed by collector, being careful not to cover the sample labels. Ship to DPHL as Biological Substance, Category B (Packing Instruction 650).
Receiving Specimens at DPHL:	Authorized specimens are received at the lab's rear (loading dock) entrance. Submitters must present ID and complete proper forms.
Handling of Specimens:	Chain of custody procedures must be followed. Urine specimens should be frozen upon collection.
Reporting Results:	Reference laboratory will notify DPHL as soon as possible. The Potential Exposure Call Log and Information form will provide information for notification of testing results outside of the DPHL.
Contact Information:	Jane Getchell, DrPH, Director DPHL, 302-223-1520 (24/7 coverage)

24/7 Emergency Contact Number: 1-888-295-5156

Revised: 04/08

Doc. No. 35-05-20/08/04/29